

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3450

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 0708

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, FR, LI

SUBJECT: FRENCH MILITARY CONTACTS WITH GOL DEFENSE MINISTER

1. FRENCH AMBASSADOR LOUIS DOLLOT, ACCOMPANIED BY THE NEWLY APPOINTED FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE COMMANDANT JEAN-CLAUDE EBRARD, (RESIDENT IN DAKAR) CALLED ON DEFENSE MINISTER HARRY GREAVES JANUARY 26. GREAVES ASKED LTC CUMMINS OF THE US MILITARY MISSION TO SIT IN ON THE CONVERSATION. AFTER PRESENTATION OF EBRARD'S CREDENTIALS, GREAVES EXTENDED A FORMAL WELCOME AND TOOK THE OCCASION TO COMMENT ON THE LONG ASSOCIATION BETWEEN FRANCE AND LIBERIA. SPECIFIC REFERENCE WAS MADE TO A 19TH CENTURY GIFT OF A WARSHIP BY FRANCE. AMBASSADOR DOLLOT THEN ASSURED THE MINISTER THAT FRANCE IS STILL EAGER TO ASSIST THE LIBERIAN PEOPLE AND NOTED SEVERAL CURRENT PROGRAMS IN THE CIVIC FIELD. GREAVES COMMENTED THAT LIBERIA WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY ASSISTANCE FROM ANY GOVERNMENT SO LONG AS THAT GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF LIBERIA. THE AMBASSADOR COMMENTED THAT FRANCE, ALONG WITH OTHERS, IS ANXIOUS TO ASSIST BUT WAS RELUCTANT TO DO SO BECAUSE LIBERIA'S CLOSE TIES TO THE UNITED STATES. GREAVES COMMENTED THAT BOTH ARE MEMBERS OF THE FREE WORLD AND SHOULD BE WILLING TO HELP UNDERDEVELOPED NATIONS - PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA.

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2. AFTER AGREEING ON A SCHEDULE OF VISITS BY COMMANDANT EBRARD, AMBASSADOR DOLLOT INVITED GREAVES TO ATTEND A DINNER AND PRESENTED GREAVES WITH THE INVITATION LIST. ON READING THE LIST, GREAVES NOTED THAT COLONEL HUNTER, CHIEF OF THE US MILITARY MISSION, HAD NOT BEEN INCLUDED. HE NOTED THE OMISSION AND SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE "MY MILITARY ADVISOR" INCLUDED IN THE DINNER. AMBASSADOR DOLLOT COUNTERED BY SAYING THAT THIS

WOULD MAKE SEATING DIFFICULT. GREAVES INSISTED AND THE FRENCH THEN AGREED TO INCLUDE HUNTER.

3. COMMENT: GREAVES TOLD COLONEL HUNTER LATER THAT THE GOF HAD PREVIOUSLY SHOWN A DESIRE TO SELL MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO THE GOL, PARTICULARLY SHIPS. THE GOL FOUND FRENCH SHIPS TOO EXPENSIVE AND THE TERMS UNATTRACTIVE. GREAVES ALSO WAS CONCERNED OVER LOGISTICS, LANGUAGE AND TRAINING PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH PURCHASE OF FRENCH MATERIEL. FRENCH FIRST SECRETARY JACQUEMIN TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR JANUARY 28 THAT HE SAW LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE GOF WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PROVIDING SIGNIFICANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN ANY FORM TO THE GOL.
CARTER

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